IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 14, 15 and 28-31, and add new claims 32 and 33, such that the claims read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a disposable undergarment comprising:

moving a web of body panel material in a longitudinal machine direction;

forming a cutout in said web and thereby removing a portion of said body panel material from said web;

cutting said web of body panel material along said longitudinal machine direction and thereby forming a rear body panel web and a front body panel web, wherein said cutting said web of body panel material comprises forming first and second cut edges on said front and rear body panel webs, wherein said removed portion of said body panel material does not form any part of said front and rear body panel webs; and

connecting a crotch member to each of said rear and front body panel webs, wherein said crotch member covers said cutout.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said cutting said web comprises cutting said web such that said cutout is formed entirely in one of said front and rear body panel webs.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said cutting said web comprises cutting said web such that a portion of said cutout is formed in each of said front and rear body panel webs.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said cutout has a substantially circular shape.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said cutout has a substantially oval shape.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~wherein said cutting said web comprises forming first and second cut edges on said front and rear body panels respectively,~~ wherein said first and second cut edges are non-linear.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~wherein said cutting said web comprises forming first and second cut edges on said front and rear body panel webs respectively,~~ wherein said first and second cut edges are substantially linear.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said web has a body side surface and a garment side surface, and wherein said connecting said crotch member to each of said front and rear body panel webs comprises connecting said crotch member to said garment side surface of each of said front and rear body panel webs.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said web has a body side surface and a garment side surface, and wherein said connecting said crotch member to each of said front and rear body panel webs comprises connecting said

crotch member to said body side surface of each of said front and rear body panel webs.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a disposable undergarment comprising:

moving a web of body panel material in a longitudinal machine direction;

~~The method of claim 1 further comprising~~ stretching said web in said longitudinal direction ~~prior to said forming said cutout in said web~~ to a stretched condition;

forming a cutout in said web while said web is in said stretched condition;

cutting said web of body panel material along said longitudinal machine direction and thereby forming a rear body panel web and a front body panel web; and

connecting a crotch member to each of said rear and front body panel webs, wherein said crotch member covers said cutout.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said forming said cutout and cutting said web of body panel material along said longitudinal machine direction are done simultaneously with a single cutting device.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising separating said front and rear body panel webs prior to connecting said crotch member thereto.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said crotch member comprises a top sheet, a back sheet and a retention portion disposed between said top sheet and said back sheet.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising stretching at least one of said front and rear body ~~panels~~ panel webs to a stretched condition prior to said connecting said crotch member thereto and connecting said crotch member to said at least one of said front and rear body panel webs when in said stretched condition.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said crotch member comprises at least one fold, wherein said connecting said crotch member to said front and rear body ~~panels~~ panel webs comprises connecting said at least one fold to said front and rear body ~~panels~~ panel webs.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said crotch member comprises an elastic material.

Claims 17-27 (Cancelled).

28. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a disposable undergarment comprising:

moving a web of body panel material in a longitudinal machine direction;

forming a cutout in said web and thereby removing a portion of said body panel material from said web;

cutting said web of body panel material along said longitudinal machine direction and thereby forming a rear body panel web and a front body panel web each having a cut terminal edge, wherein said cutout is located entirely in one of said front and rear body panel webs, and wherein said removed portion of said body panel material does not form any part of said front and rear body panel webs;

separating said front and rear body panel webs wherein said cut terminal edges of said front and rear body panels are spaced apart in a non-overlapping configuration and form a gap therebetween; and

connecting a crotch member to each of said rear and front body panel webs, wherein said crotch member covers said cutout.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 28 further comprising stretching said web in said longitudinal direction to a stretched condition prior to said forming said cutout in said web, and wherein said forming said cutout comprises forming said cutout in said stretched web.

30. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a disposable undergarment comprising:

moving a web of body panel material in a longitudinal machine direction;

forming a cutout in said web;

cutting said web of body panel material along said longitudinal machine direction and thereby forming a rear body panel web and a front body panel web, wherein a portion of said cutout is located in each of said front and rear body panel webs, wherein said portions of said cutout formed in each of said front and rear body panel webs are aligned in a lateral cross direction;

separating said front and rear body panel webs wherein said cut terminal edges of said front and rear body panels are spaced apart in a non-overlapping configuration and form a gap therebetween; and

connecting a crotch member to each of said rear and front body panel webs, wherein said crotch member covers said cutout.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30 further comprising stretching said web in said longitudinal direction to a stretched condition prior to said forming said cutout in said web, and wherein said forming said cutout comprises forming said cutout in said stretched web.

32. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein said cutting said web of body panel material is performed separately from and after said forming said cutout in said web.

33. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein said cutting said web of body panel material is performed separately from and before said forming said cutout in said web.